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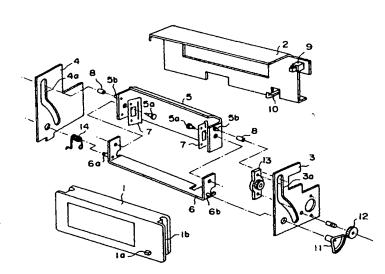
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(54) Title: OPERATION PANEL REVERSING MECHANISM FOR ON-VEHICLE SOUND EQUIPMENT

(54) 発明の名称: 車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構



(57) Abstract: An operation panel reversing mechanism for on-vehicle sound equipment simple in mechanism and capable of preventing it from being stolen without removing it from a vehicle, wherein a panel supporting member (6) rotatably supporting the operation panel (1) is installed projectedly from a cabinet and energized in the direction of projection by the elastic force of a spring (14) and, with the panel supporting member (6) projected from the cabinet, the operation panel (1) is reversed manually and the panel supporting member (6) is moved backward against the elastic force of the spring (14), whereby the operation panel (1) can be installed on the front surface of the cabinet with that panel reversed.

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(57) 要約:

機構が簡単であり、しかも、操作パネルを取り外すことなく盗難を防止できる車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構を提供する。操作パネル1を回動自在に支持するパネル支持部材6を筐体から突出自在に設けて、ばね14の弾力で突出方向に付勢し、パネル支持部材6を筐体から突出させた状態で手動で操作パネル1を反転させると共にパネル支持部材6をばね14の弾力に抗して後退させ、操作パネル1を反転させた状態で筐体前面に装着可能とした。

PCT/JP00/04314

明 細 書

車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構

技術分野

この発明は車載用音響機器に係わり、特に、使用者が車から離れるときに車載用音響機器を隠して盗難を防止するのに便利な車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構に関する。

背景技術

使用者が車から離れるときに、車載用音響機器を隠して盗難を防止するための機構が知られている。第8図は従来の車載用音響機器の盗難防止機構の例を示す斜視図である。

図に示す操作パネル1は筐体に固定された固定アーム17に回動自在に支持され、図示していないばねにより前方に回動するように付勢されている。第8図(a)に示すように操作パネル1が筐体の前面を覆う状態が使用状態であり、このとき、操作パネル1は図示していないロック機構によりばねの弾力に抗して図に示す状態に保持されている。

第8図(a)に示す状態でパネルオープン釦1aを押すと、ロック機構のロックが外れて操作パネル1は第8図(b)に示すように前方に倒れる。この状態では第8図(c)に示すように、操作パネル1を取り外すことができ、車から離れるときは操作パネル1を持ち出して盗難を防止する。

上記した従来の盗難防止機構では、盗難を防止するためには、操作パネルを外して携帯しなければならず、面倒であり、また、操作パネルを紛失する恐れがあった。さらに、操作パネルの裏面を種々の表示のために利用することができなかった。

操作パネルを外すことなく、盗難を防止できる機構として、操作パネルを反転させ操作パネルの裏面を表側として車載用音響機器を 隠すように操作パネルを駆動する駆動機構を本願出願人が提案して いる。

特願平7-303412号(特開平9-123842号)に本願の出願人が提案した車載用音響機器は、音響機器本体に回動自在に設けたレバーに操作パネルの側面端部を軸を介して回動自在に支持させ、前記軸を中心とするように第1のギヤを操作パネルに固着し、前記レバーの中間に立設された軸に第2のギヤを回転自在に支持し、音響機器本体に前記レバーの回動中心を中心とするように第3のギヤを固着し、第1のギヤと第2のギヤを噛み合わせ、第2のギヤと第3のギヤを噛み合わせると共に、前記レバーを回動駆動する構成となっている。

この操作パネル駆動機構では、操作パネルをその端部の軸回りに ギヤにより自転させるが、操作パネルに加わる重力が前記ギヤの駆動トルクの負荷として作用するために駆動機構の伝達トルクが大き くなり、装置が大掛かりになるという問題があった。

また、操作パネルの自転軸はシャーシの軸回りの円弧状で移動し、 その回動速度は自転速度と一定の比率であるため、操作パネルが水 平となって後方の記録媒体挿入口を開くとき、操作パネルが略中央 の高さ位置にあり、記録媒体挿入排出のために大きい空間を確保で きないという問題があった。

特願平8-103935号(特開平9-267699号)に本願の出願人が提案した車載用音響機器は、前記車載用音響機器の操作パネルの端部の軸を支持するレバーをさらにシャーシに回動自在に

支持されたレバーに回動自在に支持させ、これら2つのレバーを回動させながら、操作パネルに固着されたギヤにより操作パネルを自転させる構成となっている。

このような構成とすることにより、操作パネルが水平となって後 方の記録媒体挿入口を開くとき、操作パネルを下方に位置させて、 記録媒体挿入排出のために大きい空間を確保することができる。

しかしながら、操作パネルをその端部の軸回りにギヤにより自転させるトルクが大きくなることは前述の機構と同様であり、さらに、この場合は操作パネルを支持するレバーが他のレバーに回動自在に支持されるために装置が大掛かりになるという問題があった。

発明の概要

この発明は上記した点に鑑みてなされたものであって、その目的とするところは、機構が簡単であり、しかも、操作パネルを取り外すことなく盗難を防止できる車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構を提供することである。

この発明の車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構は、操作パネルを回動自在に支持するパネル支持部材を筐体から突出自在に設けてばねの弾力で突出方向に付勢し、前記パネル支持部材を筐体から突出させた状態で手動で操作パネルを反転させると共にパネル支持部材を前記ばねの弾力に抗して後退させ、操作パネルを反転させた状態で筐体前面に装着可能としたものである。

また、前記車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構において、パネル支持部材は回動することにより筐体から突出し、前記操作パネルに設けた凸部が筐体または筐体に固定された部材のガイド溝に案内されるように構成したものである。

さらに、この発明の車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構は、操作パネルを回動自在に支持する操作パネル支持部材を筐体に回転自在に支持し、前記操作パネルを筐体から離れる方向に回動させて手動で前記パネル支持部材を回転させることにより操作パネルを反転させた後前記操作パネルを筐体に向けて回動させ、操作パネルを反転させた状態で筐体前面に装着可能としたものである。

図面の簡単な説明

第1図は、この発明の第1の実施例である車載用音響機器のパネル反転機構を示す分解斜視図である。

第2図(a)は同パネル反転機構を示す斜視図、第2図(b)は同パネル反転機構を示す側面図である。

第3図(a)は同パネル反転機構の他の状態を示す斜視図、第3図(b)は同パネル反転機構の同状態を示す側面図である。

第4図(a)は同パネル反転機構のさらに他の状態を示す斜視図、 第4図(b)は同パネル反転機構の同状態を示す側面図である。

第5図(a)は同パネル反転機構の部分を示す斜視図、第5図(b)は同パネル反転機構の同部分の他の状態を示す斜視図である。

第6図は、この発明の第2の実施例である車載用音響機器のパネル反転機構の概略構成を示す側面図である。

第7図は、この発明の第3の実施例である車載用音響機器のパネル反転機構を示す斜視図である。

第8図は、従来の車載用音響機器の盗難防止機構の例を示す斜視 図である。

発明の実施の形態

この発明の実施例である車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構を

図面に基づいて説明する。第1図はこの発明の第1の実施例である車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構を示す分解斜視図である。

図に示す後側ベース板 2 、右側ベース板 3 および左側ベース板 4 は筐体に固定されている。パネル支持部材 6 はそれに立設された軸 6 a および軸 6 b が夫々左側ベース板 4 および右側ベース板 3 に支持されることにより筐体に対して回動可能に支持されている。そして、捩りコイルばね 1 4 はパネル支持部材 6 を図の右下から見て反時計方向に付勢している。

メインギヤ11は軸6bに固着され、パネル支持部材6と一体となっている。アイドラギヤ12は右側ベース板3に回転自在に支持され、メインギヤ11および右側ベース板3に取付けられたギヤダンパー13と噛み合っている。パネル支持部材6が捩りコイルばね14の弾力により回動するときはギヤダンパー13が回転し、パネル支持部材6の回動速度が抑えられる。

操作パネル1はパネルブラケット5に板ばね7、7を介して挟持され、パネルブラケット5と一体となっている。パネルブラケット5に立設された軸5a、5aは夫々パネル支持部材6の穴と嵌合し、パネルブラケット5および操作パネル1は軸5a、5aを介してパネル支持部材6に回動自在に支持されている。

パネル支持部材 6 に立設された軸 5 b、 5 bに夫々嵌着されたローラ 8、 8 は夫々右側ベース板 3 のガイド溝 3 a および左側ベース板 4 のガイド溝 4 a を挿通しており、パネルブラケット 5 のパネル支持部材 6 に対する回動位置が規制される。

後側ベース板2に取付けられたロックアーム10は第1図に示す 操作パネル1が正転した状態で操作パネル1の下方をロックし、後 側ベース板 2 に取付けられたプッシュロック 9 は操作パネル 1 が反転した状態で操作パネル 1 のリブ 1 bをロックする。なお、ロックアーム 1 0 のロックは操作パネル 1 に設けられたパネルオープン釦1を押すことにより解除され、プッシュロック 9 のロックは操作パネル 1 を押すことにより解除される。

次に、第2図~第5図を参照して上記操作パネル反転機構の動作を説明する。第2図(a)および(b)は通常の使用状態を示しており、この状態では先に説明したように操作パネル1の下方がロックアーム10に係止されている。この状態でパネルオープン釦1aを押すとロックアーム10のロックが解除され、操作パネル1の下方が前方に突出可能となる。

すると、パネル支持部材 6 は操作パネル 1 の下方が突出するように操作パネル 1 を傾動させながら捩りコイルばね 1 4 の弾力により前方に回動する。なお、操作パネル 1 の傾動角はローラ 8 がガイド溝 3 a および 4 a に案内されることにより確定される。

第3図(a)および(b)はパネル支持部材6が前方に回動した状態を示す。このとき、操作パネル1の上方が大きく空いており、筐体内への記録媒体の挿入または排出が可能となる。操作パネル1を反転させる場合は、第3図(a)および(b)に示す状態から操作パネル1を時計方向に回動させながら筐体側へ押し込む。

第4図(a)および第4図(b)はそのように操作パネル1を押し込んでいる途中の状態を示している。なお操作パネル1を反時計方向に回動させながら筐体側へ押し込むことにより第2図(a)および(b)に示す状態に戻すこともできる。

このように操作パネル1を反時計方向に回動させることにより操

作パネル1を反転させた状態で筐体の前面に装着できるが、そのときのロック状態を第5図により説明する。第5図(a)は操作パネル1を反転させた状態で筐体の前面に装着する直前の状態を示し、このときプッシュロック9の係止部9aは上から見て反時計方向に回動している。

操作パネル1を押し込むとプッシュロック9の係止部9aは僅かに後退して時計方向に回動しロック状態となる。ロック状態となった後操作パネル1を放すと係止部9aは僅かに前進するがロック状態は維持され、第5図(b)に示すように操作パネル1のリブ1bを係止しており、操作パネル1が反転した状態に維持される。

第5図(b)に示す状態で操作パネル1を押し込むと係止部9aは 僅かに後退して係止部9aは反時計方向に回動してロック解除状態 となる。ロックが解除されると、操作パネル1は捩りコイルばね1 4の弾力により第3図(a)および(b)に示す位置まで傾動される。 1度押すとロックし、ロック状態でさらに押すとロック解除状態と なるプッシュロックは既に市販されている。

第3図(a)および(b)に示す状態から操作パネル1を第2図(a)および(b)に示す正転状態に装着すること、および第4図(a)および(b)に示す反転状態に装着することが可能であることは以上の説明から明かである。

上記実施例では操作パネルを反転させた状態で取り外すことなく 盗難を防止できるので操作パネルを紛失する恐れがない。また、操 作パネルの上方を大きく空けるように移動させ、操作パネルの移動 軌跡は複雑となるが、手動で操作パネルを動かすので機構は簡単と なり、しかも記録媒体の挿入排出のスペースを大きくとることがで きる。

第6図はこの発明の第2の実施例である車載用音響機器のパネル 反転機構の概略構成を示す側面図である。この例ではパネル支持部 材15は筐体に突出自在に支持されており、ばね18により突出方 向に付勢されている。パネル支持部材15はまた操作パネル1を回 動自在に支持している。

第6図(a)は操作パネル1が正転状態で筐体の前面に装着された 状態を示しているがこのとき操作パネル1は図示していないロック 機構によりロックされている。このロック機構のロックを解除する と、ばね18の弾力により第6図(b)に示すようにパネル支持部材 15が押し出される。

この状態において手動で第6図(c)に示すように操作パネル1を 反転させることができる。操作パネル1を反転させた後、手で操作 パネル1を押し込むことにより第6図(d)に示すように操作パネル 1を反転させた状態で筐体の前面に装着できる。なお、このときも 操作パネル1は図示していないロック機構によりロックされる。

上記実施例では操作パネルを反転させた状態で取り外すことなく 盗難を防止できるので操作パネルを紛失する恐れがない。また、手動で操作パネルを動かすので機構は簡単となる。

第7図はこの発明の第3の実施例である車載用音響機器のパネル 反転機構を示す。この例ではパネル支持部材16は筐体に中心軸回 り回転自在に支持されており、操作パネル1を回動自在に支持して いる。

第7図(a)は音響機器の使用状態を示しており、操作パネル1が 正転状態で筐体の前面に装着されている、この状態では操作パネル 1は図示していないロック機構によりロックされている。

このロック機構のロックを解除すると、図示していないばねの弾力により第7図(b)に示すように操作パネル1が筐体の前面から離れるように回動される。この状態において操作パネル1をパネル支持部材16と共に図におけるA方向に180°回転させた後、操作パネル1を筐体前面に向けて回動させることにより、第7図(c)に示すように操作パネル1を反転させた状態で筐体の前面に装着できる。なお、このときも操作パネル1は図示していないロック機構によりロックされる。

上記実施例では操作パネルを反転させた状態で取り外すことなく 盗難を防止できるので操作パネルを紛失する恐れがない。また、手動で操作パネルを動かすので機構は簡単となり、しかも記録媒体の 挿入排出のスペースを大きくとることができる。

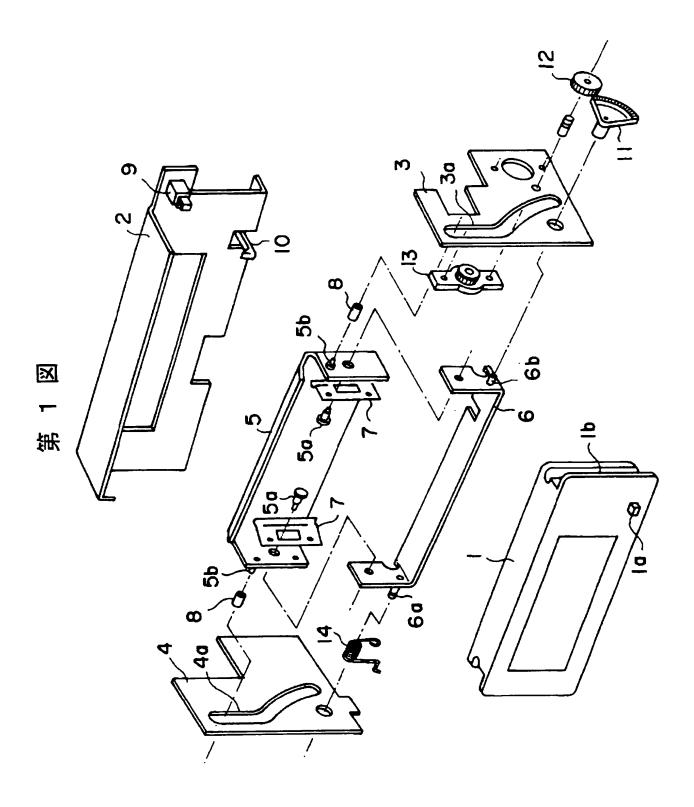
産業上の利用可能性

この発明の車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構によれば、操作パネルの裏面に表示装置を設ける場合は、2種類の操作パネルの使用が可能となる。また、操作パネルの裏面をブランクとする場合は、操作パネルを反転させて、操作パネルを取り外すことなく盗難を防止でき、操作パネルを紛失する恐れがない。

さらに、手動でパネルを動かすのでモータが必要なく、機構も簡単で製造コストが安くなる。さらに、機構が簡単であるため必要スペースが小さくなり、装置の軽量化が達成される。

請求の範囲

- 1. 操作パネルを回動自在に支持するパネル支持部材を筐体から突出自在に設けてばねの弾力で突出方向に付勢し、前記パネル支持部材を筐体から突出させた状態で手動で操作パネルを反転させると共にパネル支持部材を前記ばねの弾力に抗して後退させ、操作パネルを反転させた状態で筐体前面に装着可能とした車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構。
- 2. パネル支持部材は回動することにより筐体から突出し、前記操作パネルに設けた凸部が筐体または筐体に固定された部材のガイド溝に案内されるように構成した請求項1の車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構。
- 3. 操作パネルを回動自在に支持する操作パネル支持部材を筐体に回転自在に支持し、前記操作パネルを筐体から離れる方向に回動させて手動で前記パネル支持部材を回転させることにより操作パネルを反転させた後前記操作パネルを筐体に向けて回動させ、操作パネルを反転させた状態で筐体前面に装着可能とした車載用音響機器の操作パネル反転機構。

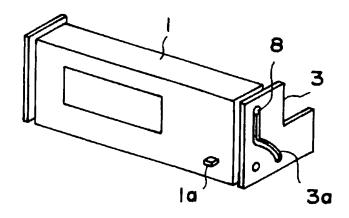


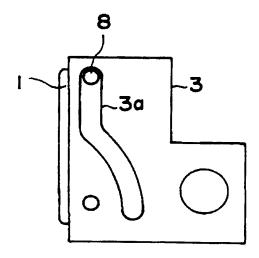
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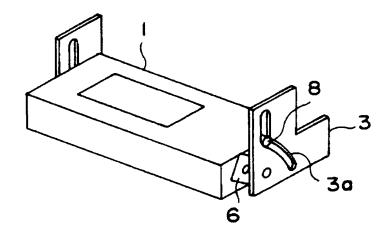
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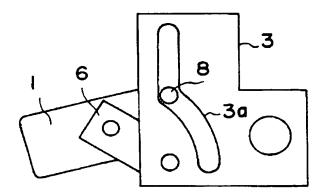




第 3 図

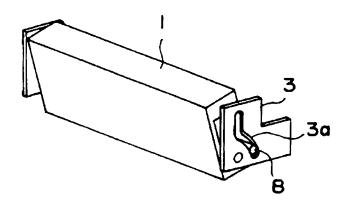
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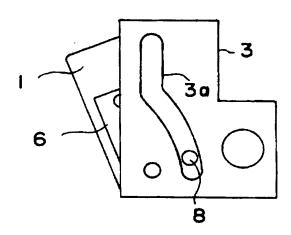






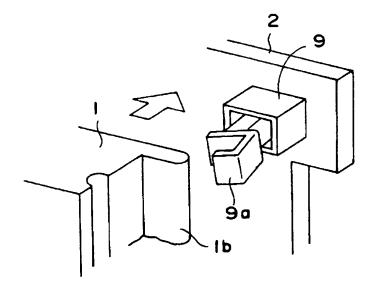
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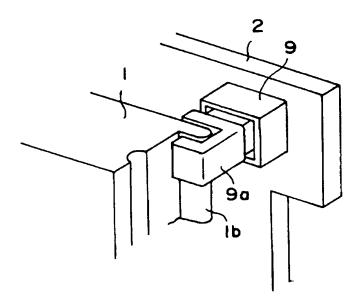




第 5 図

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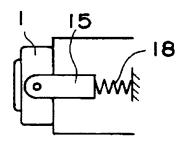


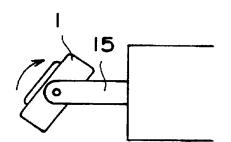


第 6 図

(a)

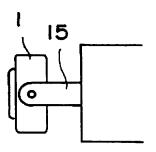
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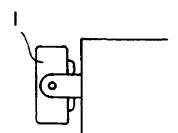




(b)

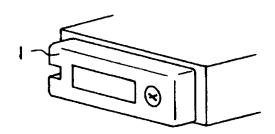
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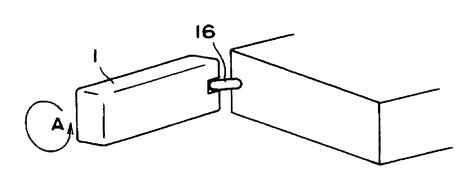




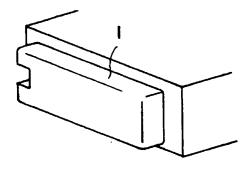
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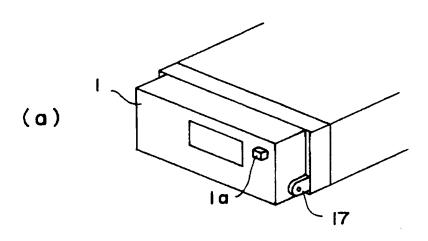
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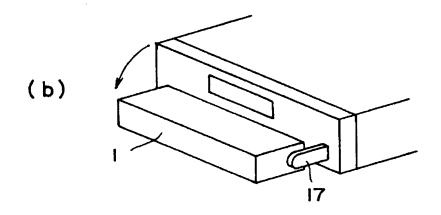


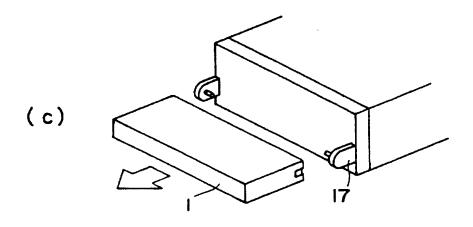
(c)











INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP00/04314

A. CLASS Int.	IFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER C1 B60R11/02, G11B33/02, 301					
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC						
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Minimum de	B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) Int.Cl ⁷ B60R11/02, G11B33/02, 301					
Jits Koka	Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1926-1996 Toroku Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1994-2000 Kokai Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1971-2000 Jitsuyo Shinan Toroku Koho 1996-2000					
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)						
C. DOCU	MENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT					
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where ap	propriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.			
X	CD-ROM of the specification and request of Japanese Utilit No.67299/1992 (Laid-open No.299 (Kenwood Corporation), 19 April, 1994 (19.04.94), Par. Nos. [0023] to [0031]; Figs	drawings annexed to the cy Model Application (47/1994)	2,3			
Y	JP, 10-114247, A (Kenwood Corpo 06 May, 1998 (06.05.98), Full text & CN, 1180899, A	oration),	1-3			
Furthe	r documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.	See patent family annex.				
Special categories of cited documents: document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art document member of the same patent family				
Date of the actual completion of the international search 07 September, 2000 (07.09.00) Date of mailing of the international search report 19 September, 2000 (19.09.00)						
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ Japanese Patent Office		Authorized officer				
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A. 発明の属する分野の分類(国際特許分類(IPC)) Int. Cl. ⁷ B60R11/02, G11B33/02, 301					
B. 調査を行った分野 調査を行った最小限資料(国際特許分類(IPC)) Int. Cl. 7 B60R11/02, G11B33/02, 301					
最小限資料以外の資料で調査を行った分野に含まれるもの 日本国実用新案公報 1926-1996年 日本国公開実用新案公報 1971-2000年 日本国登録実用新案公報 1994-2000年 日本国実用新案登録公報 1996-2000年					
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C. 関連すると認められ 引用文献の	る文献		関連する		
カテゴリー* 引用文	(献名 及び一部の箇所が関連すると	きは、その関連する箇所の表	示 請求の範囲の番号		
Y 願公開 6 を記録し 994 -7図	照用新案登録出願4-6729 -29947号)の願書に添 たCD-ROM(株式会社か (19.04.94),【00 (ファミリーなし)	系付した明細書及び図面の アンウッド), 19.4) 0 23】-【0031】,	の内容 2, 3 月. 1 第1		
Y JP, 1 月. 15 99, A	0-114247, A (株式 998 (06. 05. 98), A	t会社ケンウッド), 6. 全文 & CN, 11	5 1 - 3 8 0 8		
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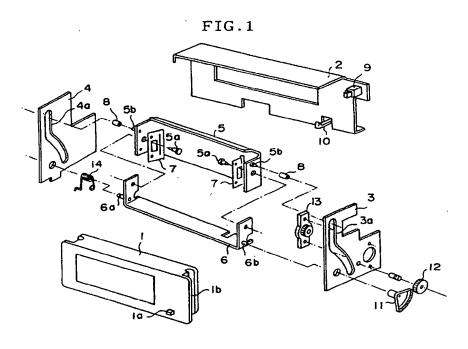
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(54) OPERATION PANEL REVERSING MECHANISM FOR ON-VEHICLE SOUND EQUIPMENT

(57) An operation panel reversing mechanism for on-vehicle sound equipment simple in mechanism and capable of preventing it from being stolen without removing it from a vehicle, wherein a panel supporting member (6) rotatably supporting the operation panel (1) is installed projectedly from a cabinet and energized in

the direction of projection by the elastic force of a spring (14) and, with the panel supporting member (6) projected from the cabinet, the operation panel (1) is reversed manually and the panel supporting member (6) is moved backward against the elastic force of the spring (14), whereby the operation panel (1) can be installed on the front surface of the cabinet with that panel reversed.



Description

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to vehicle mount audio equipment, and more particularly, to an operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment which is useful for concealing the equipment to prevent it from being stolen when the user leaves the vehicle.

BACKGROUND ART

[0002] A mechanism is known which prevents vehicle mount audio equipment from being stolen by concealing it when the user leaves the car. Figure 8 is a perspective view of an example of a conventional mechanism which prevents vehicle mount audio equipment from being stolen.

[0003] In the figure, an operation panel 1 is rotatably supported by a fixed arm 17, which is secured to a housing, and urged by a spring, not shown, to rotate forward. As shown in FIG. 8(a), the operation panel 1 covers the front of the housing when in use. In this state, the operation panel 1 is retained against spring elasticity by a lock mechanism, not shown, as shown in the figure.

[0004] When a panel open button la is pressed in the state shown in Figure 8(a), lock of the operation panel by the lock mechanism is released, so that the operation panel 1 falls forward as shown in Figure 8(b). In this state, the operation panel 1 can be removed as shown in Figure 8(c), thus allowing the vehicle mount audio equipment to be prevented from being stolen by bringing the operation panel 1 out of the vehicle when he or she leaves the vehicle.

[0005] The above-described conventional mechanism requires an operation panel to be removed and brought out to prevent vehicle mount audio equipment from being stolen. This is troublesome and may cause the operation panel to be lost. Moreover, the back of the operation panel cannot be used for various kinds of displays.

[0006] As a mechanism for preventing the vehicle mount audio equipment from being stolen without removing the operation panel, the applicant has proposed a drive mechanism which drives the operation panel to conceal the vehicle mount audio equipment by turning over the panel in such a manner that the panel faces backward

[0007] In Japanese Patent Application No. 7-303412 (Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 9-123842), the applicant proposed vehicle mount audio equipment, in which a lever which is rotatably installed on the audio equipment body supports an operation panel at the side ends thereof via a shaft so that the panel rotates freely, a first gear is secured to the operation panel so that the shaft is at the center thereof, a second gear is rotatably supported on a shaft which is

provided in the middle of the lever, and a third gear is secured to the audio equipment body so that the center of rotation of the lever is at the center thereof, the first and second gears are engaged with each other, the second and third gears are engaged with each other, and the lever is rotationally driven.

[0008] The operation panel drive mechanism, which rotates the operation panel about the shaft at the end of the panel with the gears, has a problem that, since gravity applied to the operation panel acts as a load to a driving torque of the gears, the transmission torque of the driving mechanism increases, so that the apparatus becomes large-scale.

[0009] Another problem with the mechanism is that the operation panel is at a substantially middle level, thus preventing a large space from being provided for recording medium insertion and discharge when the operation panel takes a horizontal position to open a rear recording medium inlet, because the shaft about which the operation panel rotates moves in an arc about the axis of a chassis and the ratio of the speed of the shaft to the speed of rotation of the operation panel is constant.

[0010] In Japanese Patent Application No. 8-103935 (Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 9-267699), the applicant proposed a vehicle mount audio equipment, wherein a lever which supports a shaft at the end of the operation panel of the vehicle mount audio equipment is rotatably supported by a lever which, in turn, is rotatably supported by a chassis, and an operation panel is let to rotate about a shaft, using gears secured to the operation panel while these two levers are rotated.

[0011] Such a structure allows a large space to be provided for recording medium insertion and discharge, with the operation panel positioned below when the operation panel takes a horizontal position to open a rear recording medium inlet.

[0012] However, as is the case with the above-described mechanism, torque for rotating the operation panel about the shaft at its end using the gears is large. An additional problem with the vehicle mount audio equipment is that the mechanism is large and complex, because the lever supporting the operation panel is rotatably supported by the other lever.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0013] It is an object of the present invention, which was made in light of the foregoing, to provide an operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment which is simple and allows vehicle mount audio equipment to be prevented from being stolen without removing the operation panel.

[0014] In an operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment of the present invention, a panel supporting member which rotatably supports an operation panel is provided to freely project from a hous-

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ing and urged in the direction of projection using elasticity of a spring, the operation panel is manually made to face backward with the panel supporting member projected from the housing, and the panel supporting member is moved back against elasticity of the spring to allow the operation panel to be installed on the front surface of the housing when the operation panel faces backward.

[0015] The operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment is adapted so that the panel supporting member rotates, thus projecting from the housing and that a convexity provided in the operation panel is guided along a guide slit in the housing or a member secured to the housing.

[0016] In an operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment of the present invention, an operation panel supporting member which rotatably supports an operation panel is rotatably supported on a housing, the operation panel supporting member is manually rotated by rotating the operation panel in such a direction that the panel moves away from the housing to face the operation panel backward and then the operation panel is rotated toward the housing to allow the operation panel to be installed on the front surface of the housing when the operation panel faces backward.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017]

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of a first embodiment of the present invention, or a panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment:

Figures 2(a) and 2(b) are a perspective view and a side view showing the panel turnabout mechanism, respectively;

Figures 3(a) and 3(b) are a perspective view and a side view showing the panel tumabout mechanism in another condition, respectively;

Figures 4(a) and 4(b) are a perspective view and a side view showing the panel tumabout mechanism in still another condition, respectively;

Figure 5(a) is a perspective view showing part of the panel turnabout mechanism, and Figure 5(b) is a side view showing the part in another condition; Figure 6 is a schematic side view showing a structure of a second embodiment of the present invention, or a panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment;

Figure 7 is a perspective view showing a third embodiment of the present invention, or a panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment; and

Figure 8 is a perspective view showing an example of a conventional mechanism which prevents vehicle mount audio equipment from being stolen.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

[0018] Referring now to the drawings, an embodiment of the present invention, or an operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment will be described below. Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of a first embodiment of the present invention, or an operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment.

[0019] As shown in the figure, a rear base plate 2, a right base plate 3, and a left base plate 4 are secured to a housing. A panel supporting member 6 is supported by supporting shafts 6a and 6b, provided in an upright position on the member, through the left and right base plates 4 and 3, respectively so that the member can rotate with respect to the housing. A torsion coil spring 14 urges the panel supporting member 6 counterclockwise, as viewed from the lower right corner of the figure.

[0020] A main gear 11 is secured to the shaft 6b, so that the gear is integrated with the panel supporting member 6. An idler gear 12 is rotatably supported by the right base plate 3 and engaged with the main gear 11 and a gear damper 13, which is installed to the right base plate 3. When the panel supporting member 6 rotates due to elasticity of the torsion coil spring 14, the gear damper 13 rotates, thus reducing the speed of rotation of the panel supporting member 6.

[0021] An operation panel 1 is clamped by a panel bracket 5 through leaf springs 7, 7, so that the panel is integrated with the panel bracket 5. Shafts 5a, 5a, which are provided in an upright position on the panel bracket 5, each fit 5 into holes in the panel supporting member 6. The panel bracket 5 and operation panel 1 are rotatably supported by the panel supporting member 6 through the shafts 5a, 5a.

[0022] Rollers 8, 8 which are fit over shafts 5b, 5b provided in an upright position on the panel supporting member 6 pass through guide slits 3a and 4a in the right and left base plates 3 and 4, respectively, thus limiting the position of rotation of the panel bracket 5 with respect to the panel supporting member 6.

[0023] A lock arm 10 which is installed to the rear base plate 2 locks the lower part of the operation panel 1 when the operation panel 1 as shown in Figure 1 faces forward. A push lock 9 which is installed to the rear base plate 2 locks a lib 1b of the operation panel 1 provided on the operation panel 1 when the panel faces backward. Pressing a panel open button 1 provided on the operation panel 1 causes the lock by the lock arm 10 to be released. Pushing the operation panel 1 causes the lock by the push lock 9 to be released.

[0024] Referring now to Figures 2 through 5, operation of the above-described operation panel turnabout mechanism will be described below. Figures 2(a) and 2 (b) show the mechanism in normal operating condition. As described above, the lower part of the operation panel 1 is retained by the lock arm 10. In this state, pressing the panel open button la causes the lock by the lock arm

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10 to be released, thus allowing the lower part of the operation panel 1 to project forward.

[0025] Then slanting the operation panel 1 so that the lower part of the operation panel 1 projects forward, the panel supporting member 6 rotates forward due to elasticity produced by the torsion coil spring 14. The angle of slant of the operation panel 1 is determined by the rollers 8, which are guided by the guide slits 3a and 4a. [0026] Figures 3(a) and 3(b) show the panel supporting member 6 which has rotated forward. Here there is a wide space above the operation panel 1, so that a recording medium can be inserted into, or discharged from, the housing. To turn over the operation panel 1, it should be pushed toward the housing, being rotated clockwise when the panel is as shown in Figures 3(a) and 3(b).

[0027] Figures 4(a) and 4(b) show the operation panel 1 as it is being pushed as described above. Pushing the operation panel 1 toward the housing while rotating the operation panel 1 counterclockwise allows the panel to be returned to the condition in Figures 2(a) and 2(b).

[0028] Rotating the operation panel 1 counterclockwise as described above allows the operation panel 1 to be installed on the front surface of the housing when it faces backward. Referring now to Figure 5, lock condition will be described below which is achieved when the operation panel 1 is installed on the front surface of the housing. Figure 5(a) shows the operation panel 1 as observed immediately before the panel is installed on the front surface of the housing when the panel faces backward. Here a retainer 9a of the push lock 9 rotates counterclockwise as viewed from above.

[0029] Pushing the operation panel 1 causes the retainer 9a of the push lock 9 to slightly move back and rotate clockwise, so that the operation panel is locked. Then releasing the locked operation panel 1 causes the retainer 9a to slightly move forward. However, the retainer keeps locking the operation panel 1, thus retaining the lib 1b of the operation panel 1 as shown in Figure 5(b), so that the operation panel 1 is kept faced backward.

[0030] Pressing the operation panel 1 as shown in Figure 5(b) causes the retainer 9a to slightly move back and rotate counterclockwise, thus unlocking the operation panel. When unlocked, the operation panel 1 stants due to elasticity of the torsion coil spring 14 until the panel reaches the position in Figures 3(a) and 3(b). A push lock is commercially available which shuts when pressed and opens when repressed.

[0031] It is apparent from the foregoing description that the operation panel 1 can be made to face forward as shown in Figures 2(a) and 2(b) and face backward as shown in Figures 4(a) and 4(b), starting in the condition in Figures 3(a) and 3(b).

[0032] Because the above-described embodiment does not require the operation panel to be removed to prevent the panel from being stolen when it faces backward, it is not likely to lose the panel. The embodiment

moves the operation panel to produce a wide space above the operation panel, thus complicating the path of the operation panel. However, because the operation panel is manually moved, the mechanism is simplified, and a wide space is provided for recording medium insertion and discharge.

[0033] Figure 6 is a schematic side view showing the structure of a second embodiment, or a panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment. In the embodiment, a panel supporting member 15 is supported on a housing so that the member freely projects and urged in the direction of projection by a spring 18. The panel supporting member 15 supports the operation panel 1 so that the panel freely rotates.

[0034] Figure 6(a) shows the operation panel 1 as installed on the front surface of the housing when the panel faces forward. The operation panel 1 is locked by a lock mechanism, not shown. When the lock mechanism is unlocked, the panel supporting member 15 is pushed out due to elasticity of the spring 18 as shown in Figure 6(b).

[0035] Then the operation panel 1 can manually be faced backward as shown in Figure 6(c). After faced backward, the operation panel 1 can manually be pushed in to install the operation panel 1 on the front surface of the housing when the panel faces backward. The operation panel 1 is also locked by a lock mechanism, not shown.

[0036] Because the above-described embodiment does not require the operation panel to be removed to prevent the panel from being stolen when it faces backward, it is not likely to lose the panel. Because the operation panel is manually move, the mechanism is simplified.

35 [0037] Figure 7 shows a third embodiment of the present invention, or a panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment. In the embodiment, a panel supporting member 16 is supported on a housing so that the member freely rotates about an axis. The 40 member supports the operation panel 1 so that it freely rotates.

[0038] Figure 7(a) shows how audio equipment is used. In the figure, the operation panel 1 is installed on the front surface of a housing when the panel faces forward. In this state, the operation panel 1 is locked by a lock mechanism, not shown.

[0039] When the lock mechanism is unlocked, the operation panel 1 is rotated due to elasticity of a spring, not shown, so that the panel moves away from the front of the housing as shown in Figure 7(b). After the operation panel 1 is rotated 180° in a direction A in the figure together with the panel supporting member 16, rotating the operation panel 1 toward the front of the housing allows the operation panel 1 to be installed on the front surface of the housing when the panel faces backward as shown in Figure 7(c). The operation panel 1 is also locked by a lock mechanism, not shown.

[0040] Because the above-described embodiment

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does not require the operation panel to be removed to prevent the panel from being stolen when it faces backward, it is not likely to lose the panel. Because the operation panel is manually moved, the mechanism is simplified, and a wide space is provided for recording medium insertion and discharge.

7

the housing to allow the operation panel to be installed on the front surface of the housing when the operation panel faces backward.

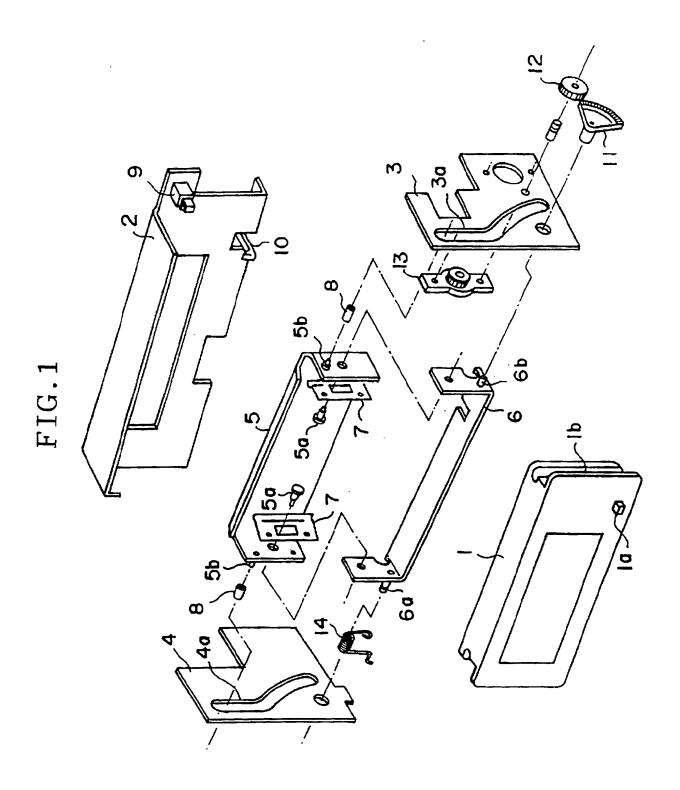
INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

[0041] An operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment of the present invention allows two types of operation panels on the back of which a display is provided to be used. If an operation panel whose back is blank is used, the panel can be made to face backward without removing it, thus preventing it from being stolen, so that it is not likely to lose the panel.

[0042] Because the operation panel is manually moved, no motor is needed, the mechanism is simplified, and its manufacturing cost is reduced. Moreover, because of the simple mechanism, a narrower space is needed, and the equipment is reduced in weight.

Claims

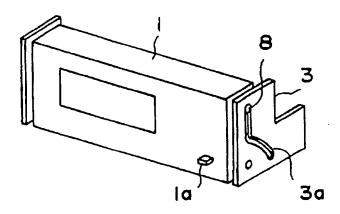
- 1. An operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment, characterized in that a panel supporting member which rotatably supports an operation panel is provided to freely project from a housing and urged in the direction of projection using elasticity of a spring, the operation panel is manually made to face backward with the panel supporting member being projected from the housing, and the panel supporting member is moved back against elasticity of the spring to allow the operation panel to be installed on the front surface of the housing when the operation panel faces backward
- 2. The operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment according to claim 1, characterized in that the mechanism is configured so that the panel supporting member projects from the housing by rotation, and that a convexity provided in the operation panel is guided along a guide slit provided in the housing or a member secured to the housing.
- 3. An operation panel turnabout mechanism for vehicle mount audio equipment, characterized in that an operation panel supporting member which rotatably supports an operation panel is rotatably supported on a housing, the operation panel is rotated in such a direction that the panel moves away from the housing, the operation panel supporting member is manually rotated to face the operation panel backward, and then the operation panel is rotated toward.



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FIG.2

(a)



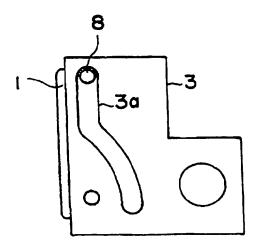
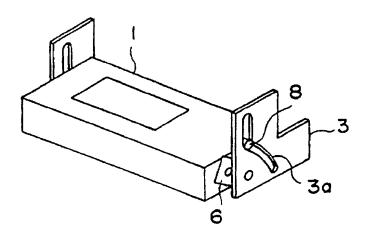
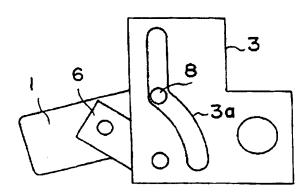


FIG.3

(a)

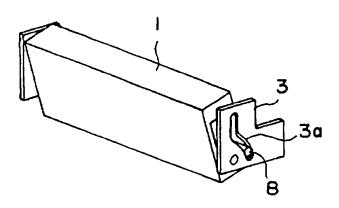




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FIG.4

(a)



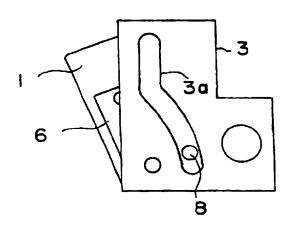
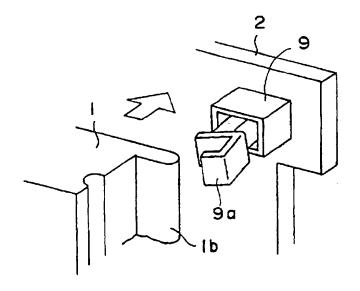
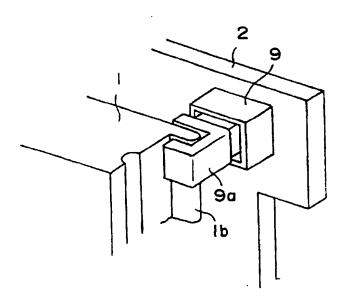


FIG.5

(a)

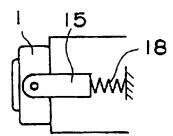


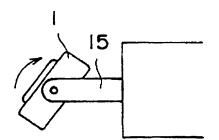




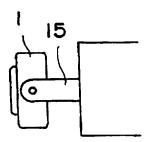












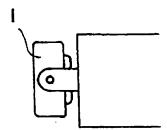
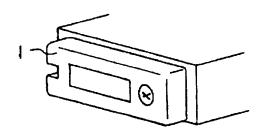
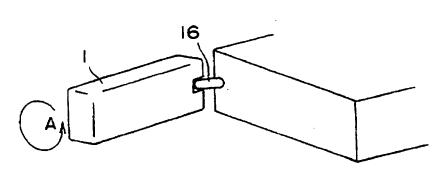


FIG.7

(a)



(b)



(c)

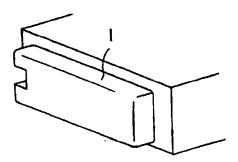
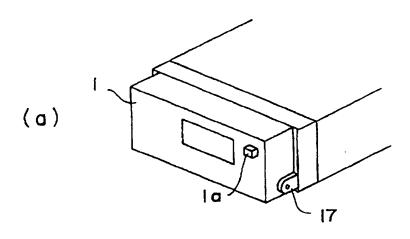
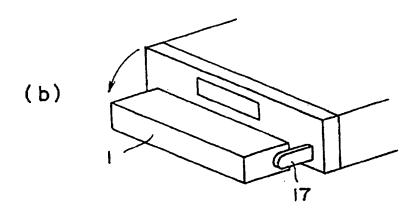
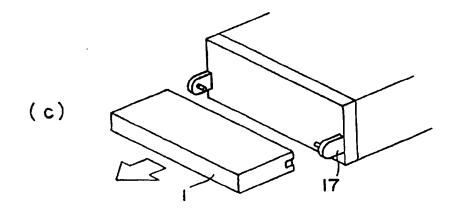


FIG.8







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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/JP00/04314

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER Int.Cl ⁷ B60R11/02, G11B33/02, 301						
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC						
B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) Int.Cl ⁷ B60R11/02, G11B33/02, 301						
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1926-1996 Toroku Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1994-2000 Kokai Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1971-2000 Jitsuyo Shinan Toroku Koho 1996-2000						
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)						
C. DOCUM	MENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT					
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where app	ropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.			
X Y	CD-ROM of the specification and crequest of Japanese Utility No.67299/1992 (Laid-open No.2994 (Kenwood Corporation), 19 April, 1994 (19.04.94),	1 2,3				
	Par. Nos. [0023] to [0031]; Figs.	1 to 7 (Family: none)	İ			
¥	JP, 10-114247, A (Kenwood Corpor 06 May, 1998 (06.05.98), Full text & CN, 1180899, A	ration),	1-3			
	decompose are listed in the continuation of Box C.	See patent family annex.				
Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" "Date of the actual completion of the international search "I" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention and considered to ensure that the priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention annot document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot of considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot oconsidered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; the claimed invention considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; the claimed invention considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; the claimed invention considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; the claimed invention considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; the claimed invention considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; the claimed invention considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; and the priority date claimed invention cannot considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance; and the pr						
Name and	September, 2000 (07.09.00) mailing address of the ISA/	Authorized officer				
Japanese Patent Office						
Facsimile No.		Telephone No.				

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (July 1992)